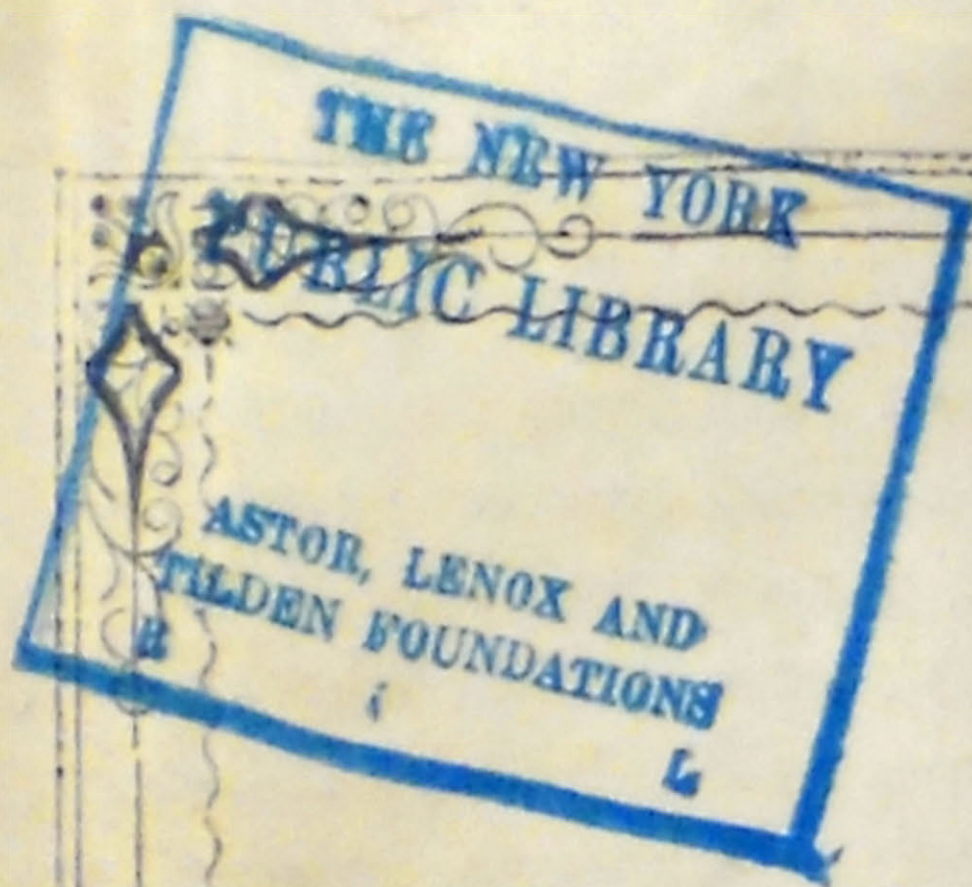




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THE

SPIRIT MESSENGER;

A Semi-Monthly Magazine.

DEVOTED TO SPIRITUAL SCIENCE, THE ELUCIDATION OF
TRUTH, AND THE PROGRESS OF MIND.

EDITED BY R. P. AMBLER.

Oct 1 / 52

"The truth shall make you free."

Jesus.

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The Spirit Messenger.

OCTOBER 1, 1852.—NEW SERIES.

GOVERNMENT OF THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

BY R. P. AMBLER.

The inquiring mind, in contemplating the inhabitants of the spiritual sphere whose number is above conception, will naturally seek to understand the principles on which they are moved and governed in the maintenance of suitable relations to each other, and in the performance of their exalted mission. It is true that this subject lies entirely beyond the sensuous observation, and cannot be investigated in the same mode in which the elements of matter are discovered and analyzed; yet the fact that the soul has a *desire* to explore the field of truth which is here presented, sufficiently proves that there is something contained in this which answers to the inward need, and that it does not lie wholly beyond the reach of human capacity,—since the aspiration of the spirit is the natural prophecy of a good that may be ultimately attained. In many minds it is indeed a great stretch of thought to even conceive of a spiritual world, and it is not strange that such minds should labor to suppress all desire to learn the condition of its inhabitants. But when the spirit has been so far developed as to fully realize its relations to the Second Sphere, it will irresistibly seek to know more of the world towards which it is tending in its progress; and it will endeavor to exercise the perceptions with which it is inherently endowed, that it may thus satisfy the thirstings for wisdom which rise up in its bosom as the beautiful evidence of unfolding life.

In accordance with this sentiment, I am influenced to investigate the subject which relates to the government of the Spirit-world,—not through the instrumentality of the senses, but through the medium of the interior understanding. The first idea which needs to be impressed, is that the world of spirit is a substantial world, substantial indeed in a higher sense than that which can be attached to material things. And in connection with this idea it should also be understood, that spirits are *real* beings, and not simply the airy shadows of perverted fancy—that they are intelligent and therefore organized existents which occupy a higher plane of being than that assigned to mortals on the earth, and that they are possessed of

all those lofty powers of thought, all those strong and holy affections, and all those delightful emotions of inward joy, which belong innately to the undeveloped and rudimental spirits on this planet. With these conceptions in view, it will appear that the principle of government must be exemplified in some form among the inhabitants of the spiritual sphere, to preserve the order, union and harmony which exist as essential features of the heavenly abode. The inquiry therefore becomes naturally suggested, What may be conceived as the plan of government by which the movements and labors of spirits are regulated? With a calm and passive spirit I await the reply, and will write as it is received.

Heaven is the abode of spirits whose thoughts and actions are the expression of internal harmony; and spirits are witnesses to the truth, that mortals on the earth have no conception of the perfect, unbroken, and undisturbed order which prevails in the heavenly mansion. When therefore the mind attempts to conceive of the beauty and grandeur of the spirit-sphere—when it thirsts to understand the blissfulness and glory that pervade the celestial sea, it should elevate its thoughts above all the transient forms of earth, and should strive to realize the perfection of all that is most perfect in the world of sense. And when likewise the mind would conceive of the condition of spirits—the social relations which they assume, the duties which they are actuated to perform, and the mode of government which they have seen to be wise and true, it must again elevate its thoughts above the false and imperfect institutions of men—above the corrupt and superficial forms of human government, and endeavor to understand the principles by which spirits are united with kindred spirits, by which the affections of the soul go forth as tendrils to all attractive forms, and by which thought passes from mind to mind and from heart to heart through the medium of angelic sympathy. It is only on this lofty and sublime plane of investigation, that the human soul on earth can grasp the realities of the spiritual life; and it is only through the abnormal quickening of the inner sense, that the transcending brightness of angel-forms and the exceeding purity of spirit-thought can be properly comprehended by mortals. And when this plane of investigation has been reached and the soul has been thus quickened in its action, the beauty, the majesty and the glory of heaven are revealed to the perceptions of the mind, as clearly and glowingly as the landscapes of earth are disclosed to the outward vision; and then can the pupil of angels—the student of celestial science, learn the laws, customs and government of the spiritual world, as satisfactorily as the members of earthly schools may understand the details of physical geography.

In the deep sea of spiritual wisdom the inhabitants of heaven perceive the beautiful truth, that man can be properly governed only by the principle of attraction that exists in the germ of the soul; and they see that this

truth is demonstrated in the world of perfected being—in the radiant home of the spirit, though it is not comprehended or exemplified by the inhabitants of the earth. This truth lies at the foundation of the celestial government; it comprehends the plan and principle on which the heavenly societies are organized and controlled. Therefore let the mind conceive of the reality which needs to be fully understood before it can clearly comprehend the system of heavenly economy. In every spirit there is a germ of brightness and purity to be developed, and within this germ resides the conscious intelligence which constitutes the principle of wisdom. Hence the germ of the spirit is the true source of thought and action, from which the springs of the soul-life send out their heavenly streams; and when this internal essence is so far developed as to be superior to every foreign influence, it unfolds a divine principle of attraction by which the spirit is governed in its movements. In the natural growth of the soul, the germ of life and consciousness which it contains, is expanded and brightened as a spark of divine light; and as this process of development is continued, the spirit begins to feel an attraction towards those objects and employments for which its inward essence has an affinity. As a consequence of this attraction, which grows stronger and deeper with the degree of unfolding, the soul is moved by an inward power which is greater than every external influence; it is controlled by a principle residing within itself, which is analogous to that by which atoms are joined to atoms in the material world; and to this positive influence all the more external faculties are caused to yield in submission, these acting only as the passive instruments of the directing will, while the latter is a silent expression of a still more interior principle living in the conscious soul. Accordingly the inhabitants of the spiritual world, when developed to a point where the inward divinity attains a supremacy over external influences, are a law unto themselves; or, in other terms, they are governed by the principle of attraction in the soul itself, by which they are led to seek the companionship of congenial spirits, to perform works that are intrinsically wise and good, and to act in harmonious concert with reference to every object which they may desire to accomplish.

The societies of earth are governed chiefly by external authority. A voice has issued from the high seats of power, and the people have bowed in obedience to its commands. The crown and scepter have been revered as the seal of authority; laws and customs have ruled the outward actions of men, and halls of justice and gloomy prisons are erected to restrain the propensities of the vicious. Thus the governments of earth are made to consist in mere external power—in the execution of laws contained in printed books, and in superficial and arbitrary regulations which are based on the most material conceptions. Therefore there is no analogy existing between the governments of earth and the government of heaven. The one

is external, material and superficial; the other is internal, spiritual and radical. While the one seeks only to control the outward actions and cause men to conform in mere appearance to the standard of virtue, the other aims only to govern the movements of the soul, and to brighten the germ of purity in its heart. Among the more developed inhabitants of the Spirit-world, there exists no semblance of external authority; there is no restraint corresponding to earthly laws and penalties; there is no influence of fear exerted to prevent deeds of wrong, but that which is right is pursued from an attraction to the quality of right—works of love and goodness are performed from an inherent inclination to the same, and the social relations in which principles of justice and sympathy are exemplified, are preserved—not from any outward bond, but from the power of an innate affinity. Hence while earthly governments are the representatives of human misdirection and wrong, the government of the spiritual sphere is the power of the principle of attraction residing in the germ of each individual soul, through which the desires, aspirations and labors of all are directed towards that which is wise, lovely, and good.

Yet the Spirit-world contains series, orders and degrees of station and influence. All spirits are not on the same plane of progression; and all do not possess the same degree of inward power. Accordingly those spirits which are most advanced breathe down an influence of love and purity to those who are less advanced, and so the inward germ becomes strengthened and expanded, within which the divine principle is developed that leads to good. Government therefore among spirits, consists in the power of the soul operating through the interior germ of intelligence that dwells in every spirit-flower which blooms in heaven. There are no stern executors of law—no gilded thrones of power, and no fearful engines of torture to enforce obedience; but the silent power of love unfolds the soul and makes an affinity for right—the principle of goodness is established in the inmost being as a fountain of immortal life. In the Spirit-land there are no prisons—no chains—no bondage. Yet there is an influence stronger and deeper than all these. The erring earth-child which has not yet grown into the harmony and wisdom of advanced circles, is led, and moved, and governed by the most gentle voices which seem as music to the inner sense; and so those who were wicked here are purified and redeemed in heaven, that they may become children of God in spirit and in truth. Therefore should it be stated in conclusion, that the government of the Spirit-world is the enlightenment and cultivation of the soul—the development and perfection of that which dwells within man as the essence of Deity; and when this government shall have been established on the earth, as it will be in the ages of the future, the great end of human happiness will be attained through an attraction to the immortal principles of Nature.

THE UNSEEN REALITY.

FROM THE INTERIOR.

There is a great truth that must be impressed on the minds of men—the superiority of the inward and the real over the outward and the false. Men have sought for truth with eager and earnest minds, but they have sought for it where it does not exist. The senses of the body have been regarded as the only medium through which the soul could look out on the beauties and glories of the visible universe. Hence men have regarded the material as the real; that which they could see with their eyes—hear with their ears—feel by their senses, they have thought the substantial reality. They have looked upon the Universe as a glorious Temple in which man was born to live and die; and when they have looked out on its light-bathed surface, and up to its star-lit dome, they have regarded it as a great theater of life in which each must perform his part, and pass to his rest. But oh, there is something deeper—more beautiful than this; there is something back of the glory of the stars—something beneath the changing forms of earth. The great Divinity lives in this expanded Temple; and all outward things and forms—all light—all beauty—all life, are but the external expression of the internal and ever-living reality. Oh, beautiful is that inward world, which the senses may not perceive. Deep as the unfathomable depths of Infinity is the realm of spiritual life. High as the majestic spheres of Heaven leads the pathway of unending progress; and here, in this great world of life, and thought and being, is the sphere of the soul's development. In this inward world dwells the divine reality for which men have sought in vain in the outward. Here is the truth that makes its appeal to the living soul. Here is the light that cheers and gladdens the inward vision. Here is the life that flows in never-ceasing streams down into the depths of the human spirit.

O how little does the world realize of the Universe? Even the realm of matter, lying in the shadows of the interminable distance, is unexplored and unappreciated; for what mind can grasp the infinity which is broader and deeper than the strongest flight of the soul?—and who can fathom the depths of all-expanding Life which fills the limitless temple of Creation? But, though the immensity of the material creation could be grasped—though suns and systems could be counted, measured and explored as they roll in their endless circuit, yet how much more grand, sublime, and glorious is that world of invisible being—that universe of interior life and light, which forms the inner sanctuary of the Divine Mind, and which exists beneath and within the expanse of material existence as the living and ever-unfold-

ing essence of spirit ! Know, O man, that there is a soul to the Universe as to thine own body ; know that the life-tides of Nature flow from the deep well-springs buried in her light-veiled bosom ; know that truth and wisdom are infinite as God, whose radiant streams, issuing from an exhaustless fountain, mingle with the upward currents of the spirit's life. Where, then, shall the real reality be sought ? Not in the forms which dissolve and perish—not in the outward veil of beauty thrown over the surface of creation—not even in the blazing suns that shine in heaven, or the cloud-wreathed mountains that stand upon the earth ; but it is to be sought rather in that life by which all matter is pervaded—in that wisdom by which the worlds were fashioned—in that truth which shines with a glory brighter than the stars—in those divine and eternal principles which are the expression of the Supreme Soul, and which constitute the living agents by which the human spirit is to be enlightened and redeemed.

Shall I say how this world is to be reformed ? Shall I say how man is to be lifted up from degradation and woe ? There is a redemption for humanity. It lies not in external forms and things. It lies not in the established institutions of the world, which have been fashioned after the vanity of the human heart. The source of human elevation lies within the man. It lies in the germ of his inward life—in the essence of his immortal nature—in the soul which bears the reflection of the Deity and is ever radiant with His smile. Reformation does not consist in any mere outward power. It does not consist in any external restraint ; it does not consist in the power of human laws ; it does not consist in jails or prisons, but it does consist in the expansion, enlightenment and development of the inward being. The springs of all life, and the source of all goodness, wisdom and purity are in the inward nature ; and these streams will flow out upon the expanse of life, they will gladden the dreary and desolate wastes of earth, they will elevate, and dignify, and reform humanity, in proportion as those inward springs are opened ; in proportion as the soul is developed and expanded ; in proportion as that germ of inward consciousness which makes *the man*—which constitutes the immortal nature, is unfolded to receive the light of Heaven. *That germ dwells in every human form.* None are so lost—none so abandoned—none so wicked, but they have this indwelling spark of the Divinity. And the great office of the angels is to quicken that spark into a bright and ever-enduring flame. It is theirs to breathe upon the cold and almost deserted shrine of the spirit, and to kindle there the radiant fires of love and purity. It is theirs to make man a spirit upon earth ; to bring him forth from his state of darkness and bondage to the glorious liberty of the children of God. It is theirs to proclaim those truths which make their appeal to the internal reason and intuition of the mind—truths which will serve to expand, to brighten and to elevate the inward soul, that it may become the

repository of those heavenly treasures which angels are ever waiting to bestow. And as spirits look down upon the expanse of human life, they delight to see that this inward germ is ripening into a bright and beautiful flower,—a flower which all the storms of time may not blast or wither, but which shall bloom in beauty unfading and immortal.

Great is the work that is going on in the earth. Man is approaching his exalted destiny. He has entered on the pathway of eternal progression, and up the high wheel of Heaven shall he ascend forever, basking in the glory of the Infinite.

THE SPHERE OF COMMUNION.

BY THOMAS L. HARRIS.

The Human Soul, in the varied processes of life, traverses three great Spheres of existence, and stands in three different attitudes of spiritual consciousness. First, it passes outwardly to the observation of the visible Universe. It gazes on the vision of Nature, as it is unfolded in the realms of universal space : this is the attitude of PERCEPTION. Second, it withdraws itself from the outward world, and directs its vision to the world within. It penetrates the mystery of mind, and heart and will ; it renews the Past in the pictures of memory, and projects the Future from its inward hope ; it arranges the treasures of knowledge ; analyzes the results of experience ; traces out the plan of action, and determines the objects and methods of life : this is the attitude of REFLECTION. Third, it withdraws from the sphere of meditation, as it has from that of perception ; it directs its spiritual aspiration to the Infinite Soul, the source of its and Nature's life ; it enters into incommunicable relations with the Divine existence ; it receives its elements, and feels them mingle with its own : and this is the attitude of COMMUNION.

In perception we look outwardly ; in meditation we look inwardly ; in communion we look upwardly. In perception we penetrate the realm of form ; in meditation the realm of law ; in communion the realm of essential and original life. In perception the senses are active ; in meditation the understanding is active ; in communion the Soul itself is active in realms above the grasp of understanding, or the sight of sense. Communion is that ultimate fact of consciousness which the devout of all times have sought to attain through prayer. It is the spirit's upward look ; its entranced and silent adoration ; its ascent into the realms where space merges in infinitude, and the successions of time melt in the circle of the one eternity. It is our return to the bosom of the Father—our absorption in the silent bliss and repose of the Absolute and Essential Life.

The senses are windows looking outward on the world of form, of color, of material life, of visible harmony, of Divine Art symbolized in creation. The Spirit stands behind the eye, as behind transparent glass, and perceives the shifting forms of Nature, their magic transmutations, their mystic loveliness; or, rather, the senses are a living and translucent atmosphere that surrounds the Soul, and on its undulation flows in from every form of being, its music, its fragrance, and its light. The ample dome of the firmament; the ancient sculpture of the mountains; the living landscape, with its hues of green and gold; the streamlets that scatter light, and melt in music as they run; the ocean, whose billows are like the keys of a mighty organ, woke to music by that weird harmonist, the blast; birds that like the poet's thought, fly on their resounding wings from zone to zone; the living shapes of the animal kingdom, and man himself, with his erect form and imperial brow;—all these are revealed to the Spirit only when it leans from the window of the senses, and stands in the attitude to perceive.

The Intellect is dome-like, bending with shining arch above the soul. Rays from the Infinite Reason converge within it, and thus comes Revelation. Beams from the spiritual world shine on it, and these are thoughts of immortality. Upon its cloudy curtains, as upon the visible firmament, when penciled by the rising or setting sun, is pictured the dawning glory of the Future, and the fading effulgence of the Past. The light that fills it, reveals the Universe. Each emotion of terror or of love that the heart created; each deed of good or ill that the will embodied; each imagination that rose rainbow-like, and spanned the soul; each idea that came and stood all radiantly before us like some fixed star to direct the track of life—all these have form, and voice, and being, within the firmamental dome of Intellect, and in reflection we enter the precincts of this personal and individual world; we gaze upon its magnificent amplitude; we introduce order amid its strange creations; we ponder over its mystery, we cast hopes and actions into the future of its fate.

But the Spirit—the looker through the windows of sense, the unfolders of the pictures of memory, and the visions of hope—is not confined to these pictures of Divine Beauty which are scattered through the universe, is not limited to these meditations of Divine Wisdom which are reflected upon the intellect. Above sense, above thought, is Communion; the soul's interchange of emotion with its Divine Original; its baptism in the divine Love; its illumination with the heavenly Wisdom; its reception of celestial Life: its translation to the real and abiding existence; its calm and tranquil rest upon the Father's bosom.

There is a unison of heart, when friend meets with friend, and the quickened pulse and the brightening countenance reveal how beautiful it is; there is an influx of pure bliss, when the soul in tranquil mood is filled

with the universal life of Nature, and feels a sense of mystic oneness with the hills and rivers, with the lily whose breath is fragrance, and the star whose life is light; there is a time of sacred joy for Lovers, the one in heart, when passion dies, and affection grows Angel-pure, and the intense emotions of the soul need no more the halting interpretation of the tongue; there is the communion of the mother with the child, when her holy love, falling like summer dew, descends to hallow and to purify the breast; there is the communion of the Poet with the harmony of the Universe, when his soul becomes an æolian lyre, which every breath of heaven awakes to melody, when for him the soul and history grew vocal, and the stars sing as well as shine; there is the communion of the Artist with ideal and supernatural Beauty, when the vail of Nature grows transparent, when he penetrates the open secret, and sees Creation as a picture of Divine Art, mirrored upon Infinitude; there is the communion of the rapt Idealist with the Angel-world, when shapes of glory move about him, and earth fades like a shadow, and Heaven dawns through radiant vistas, as if its gateway opened in the sun. But all these but poorly and faintly symbolize the soul's communion with its God, for then the limitations of humanity seem merged in the Infinite Completeness; then we are rapt away from the world of sense and time in beatific vision; then one day is richer than a thousand years, and a thousand years pass quickly as a day; then all that man ever sought is found, and aspiration itself is satisfied, and heaven is won; then holiness, and harmony, and blessedness, and joy, too deep for truth or tears, are all our own. Then within us is God's love, and around us is his perfect beauty, and all that beauty and that love is freely given. Then the great prayer of Jesus has met with its fulfillment, and we are one with God through him.

This state—the highest condition of Humanity—embodies in it prayer and its fulfillment, desire and answer, infinite aspiration, infinite fullness of beautiful life and rest. Then our will is one with God's will, and our life is found in his life. Then our desire is to be complete in love, and our desire is answered till our nature is filled, and its limits overflowed. Our will is strong, for God's will is our power; our affections are purified and made genial and active, for God's love flows through the soul. Holy emotions waft their odors about us like breath from Paradise, and we hear in spirit the voices of innumerable angels, chanting, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men.

Wakening to outward consciousness, to physical activity, from this beatific rest, our hearts glow as did the face of Moses, when he descended from the mount. Each moral nerve is once more elastic; each spiritual pulse is throbbing with the circulations of a more real and eternal life. We see a purer beauty in the outward world, to which we are introduced by the

sensuous medium. We discern the introduction of order and life into meditative thought. We are calmer to overlook and overcome life's petty annoyances. We are stronger to meet life's serious labors and difficulties, ordering and subduing them with manly and energetic will. We are stronger to do our Father's will and work, since we have rested on his bosom in the beauty of his holiness and the infinitude of his love.—*Shelinah*.

THE HOLY CITY.

AN ALLEGORY GIVEN TO "THE CIRCLE OF HOPE",

BY MRS. HEMANS.

Spirit of God ! whose glory once o'erhung
A throne, the Ark's dread cherubim between,
So let thy presence brood, though now unseen,
O'er those two powers, by whom the harp is strung—
Feeling and Thought !— till the rekindled chords
Give the long buried tone back to immortal words.

And the Heavens and the earth declare the glory and the majesty of the works of God. Great is thy name and greatly to be praised are the works of thy hand.

And I saw a beautiful city afar off, and the name of that city was "Holy." The entrance therein was through a massive gate, and on either side stood an angel whose wings were transparent with light, and around whose head was a soft halo of radiance, like unto the sun when fleecy clouds have softened the brilliancy of his ray. And their countenance was fair and beautifully serene with a pure and holy love, and they ever sang the hymn "Holiness to the Lord."

The angels who guarded that gate were called Constance and Truth, and many people were passing in and out. Some were clad in bright raiments and had radiant faces. Some had a lowly and downcast mien, and before they entered the gate, were casting imploring looks, with this expression on their faces, "may I enter?" Some strode along tall and majestically, their heads erect and their faces earnest, as if in pursuit of some great treasure to be obtained when they should enter that gate. Some were loitering in the path and gazing wishfully as though afraid to approach. Some were trembling and tears bedewed their cheeks, and they looked on one another saying, "shall we approach? we shall not be permitted to enter." Little children were traveling there hand in hand, and none of these emotions did I observe on their innocent faces. Carelessly and hopefully, brightly and lovingly, they loitered along, and their little faces seemed glad with delight as they approached that beautiful gate, and gazed on those beautiful

guards which kept the entrance. They did not ask, "may I enter?" but they entered. The guards smiled, and the smile struck me as an exceedingly happy one. But why the careless, happy laugh of childhood should make them seem happier, at the unconcern with which those little ones entered, was more than I could fathom. It struck me as remarkable; much more important seemed the entrance of those people of full growth and developed minds, and yet how different, how varied were the emotions which each countenance, each walk, each manner and mien, and whole expression together betrayed while passing before my vision.

I also reached the entrance and was permitted to enter, not however before I had asked one of the keepers the meaning of so much apparent incongruity of character exhibited by the concourse which had passed before me. The guards said, "Enter, and see for thyself with thine own eyes, and thine own eyes shall convince thee"; and I entered.

I noticed in that vast city, that those whose faces were so radiant with joy and happiness had come from a far off country, to show the new comers the localities, pursuits, and customs, and requirements of the country which they were now going to inhabit. And I observed that those who had entered with so lofty a port and imposing a mien, with head so erect, so elevated, wore a disappointed look at the barrenness of the country. They had expected to be kings and masters, and to feed on the fat of the land. They did not seem to find the palaces, the luxurious dwellings made ready to receive them which they had expected to find, and it seemed to me as though hastily constructed palaces of happiness before setting out for this country had been suddenly overthrown. They looked lost, disappointed, jealous. They did not ask "what shall I do?" but they asked "How is this? This is not the Heaven to which we expected to come. It is a cold, barren, gloomy place; nothing genial or bright to feast the eye or please the soul. Why; we were led to expect a far different place from this. This surely cannot be the Heaven we were so often told was prepared for us." They seemed to fold their hands and stand in mute despair. They looked neither to the right nor the left, but there they stood and gazed as it were on vacancy and hopelessness. How dark and bleak it seemed to them!

I turned away from them and approached a form who seemed elated at having found something very pleasing. I stepped up and accosted the person. I inquired, "why do you seem so glad? Have you found a treasure? Nothing less could make you look so happy. I would participate in your joy." The figure—which was a female—looked on me with eyes streaming with tears. "Why mortal!" she said, "this is such a beautiful place. I am enchanted, I am delighted, can it be possible that I can always live here? Why! when I inhabited a coarse body, which now I find was a shell in which the spirit moved, I was unused to such a place. My fingers ached

with toil, my heart was oppressed with sorrow, my limbs often refused to do their painful duties, and my spirit seemed bowed down to the dust. They told me, I was such a sinner, and the preacher warned me to beware of a fire prepared for such as I, who broke the commands of God, even to satisfy the cravings of hunger. I longed to live, because I dared not die. They told me God was pure and good, too pure to look upon such a sinner as I, because of my infirmities. They told me I had turned my back on God by the life which I led. I had broken his commands. I had not entered the room where his word was preached, because of my poverty and nakedness. I grew reckless and I thought, I will live on my short day, and then let me perish. How dark! how very dark, the future seemed! But when worn out with disease and long suffering, my heart weary and and heavy laden, I laid down, most unwillingly too, my mortal body. And when I awaked, a beautiful being came and took me by the hand and led me a long distance from earth, and put me upon the road, by which all those people have entered through that gate. I had not hoped to enter it, but I was impelled to enter by a power of I know not what. And when I entered it, why! what a beautiful place I found it! Oh! I cannot—cannot describe my joy and happiness. So many smiled upon me! They take me by the hand and welcome me. Such beautiful looking people! I did not think they would notice me—a poor creature like me. Why! every thing here dazzles my eyes with ecstatic beauty and splendor which every where meets my view. The very ground I tread upon seems to be of such a brilliant hue. It is almost transparent and yields to my touch. I neither know whether I walk or glide. It seems to me I do not tread at times. It is a gentle undulating motion, so unlike the painful steps my poor weary feet used to tread. And Oh! how beautiful and green the grass appears. And the leaves! they wave so gently in the wind. The air which is wafted from the leaves across my brow, seems to fill me with such intense joy that I could soar as a bird in the air. Oh! what a lovely place is this! I see such broad and shining rivers, and moon, and sun—but so much more bright than I ever beheld on earth. How strange it all seems! The very stars seem to smile as they twinkle, and music fills the air wherever I turn my ear. It is more Heaven than I ever dared dream of, more than I could ever conceive. How I wish to go back and tell the world—my friends of this lovely place! They would not believe me. Why! Heaven is entirely too poor a name! I cannot tell you, it is so beautiful! so beautiful!

“That radiant spirit met me and said, ‘Poor mortal! poor child of clay—of sorrow and of suffering, rest thou here. Here the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. This is thy Heaven, as long as it shall appear Heaven to thee. But Heaven is not a place, but an endless continuation of places.’”

I then turned and beheld those loiterers. They were very slowly approaching in their journey through that great city. They seemed careless somewhat—doubtful somewhat—fearing their progress should every moment be impeded from some unforeseen obstacle placed in the way by some uncertain power. I approached the loiterer and said, “Why do you tarry? Why do you not hasten, as your fellow travelers are doing! Have you no object in view—no desire to explore this unknown country! Do you not wish for a guide! Why, haste thee, loiterer! The bright ones will outstrip thee, and thou wilt be left in the rear and thy path become toilsome with none to lead thee.” He turned upon me a look of inquiry—for I perceived he was a man—but I could perceive no earnest look in his eyes, no heightened color in his cheek. He would take a few steps forward and turn, look back, and pause, and then seem to shrink as though in fear, and anon would look forward. He said to me, “I never was in a hurry. I never could make up my mind whether to be a Christian or a sinner, as the world calls it. I thought I would take the middle path and risk the future. I liked the world so well that I followed its precepts, and where duty was an easy path, very easily I walked therein. I was very contented to think that Heaven should be my home, but farther than this I did not search, thinking that many would be situated in the same position I was, and why should I fare worse than they? Well, in this state of mind, I cast off my body. I emerged into a country, of whose character and bearings I was altogether ignorant. Indeed I am still fearful that I may have entered the wrong passage. Had I not better return and seek another entrance! This does not seem to me so much like Heaven. I am afraid, if I go on, it will lead me to a Hell they used to talk about. It makes me uneasy. I don’t like to crowd along. What is your opinion?”

I said, “Poor spirit! go on thy journey, learn wisdom, and make up for lost privileges, for lost happiness, and for never-realized hopes. Ah! poor mortal! What have you not lost! An uncertainty through life, has almost become an uncertainty after death. Oh, thou radiant guide! Wilt not thou approach! Wilt thou not tell this poor misguided soul how weak and unstable is the guide which makes unto itself a guide of others’ opinions! When the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”

I turned from the sad spectacle, and near me, I saw those trembling ones with tears upon their cheeks. Ah! the tearful eyes, how sad they look and yet how hoping! Slowly they approached,—tremblingly they lifted up their voice and exclaimed, “Oh this place is so beautiful, we will not be permitted to stay. It is only a glimpse of Heaven, only a thought of beauty to gladden us on our entrance into the shadows of the Spirit-world. Why! they told us of the valley of the shadow of death. They told us of the path’s being narrow and of the few that entered it. They must have been

mistaken in the way they took those words, that passage. A great many are walking in that way, we are walking in it. Oh! oh! it's Heaven! It is Heaven. It is the Heaven we heard about, but it is the Heaven we never expected to enter. It was kept at such a great distance from us! They said it was the pure, the sanctified, the meek, and the lowly, and the god-fearing, the sin-hater and the well-doing that entered Heaven. We never thought we were the well-doers. We never expected so great a boon. We never anticipated being so near Heaven. It seemed so very dim and distant. And now here we are, and here is Heaven! Why! a short time ago, we were down in the busy world, jostled in the crowd and overlooked—sometimes sneered at, sometimes scoffed at, often unnoticed. But oh! we did love God, we did right as near as we knew how, though not all they told us was right. We lived and died as mortals do, and here we are; some in one path and some in another, some in one direction and some in another, that leads to this beautiful country. Some are in fields where grass is just beginning to grow; some walking through paths of shade and sunshine; some are ever picking flowers; and some are seeking for treasures, which they call knowledge, which they sought for long on earth, but never found because of their inability to attain the gift. They have gone to a building which they call a place of instruction, and they say that is a Heaven to them already. They say their souls have ever hungered on earth without being satisfied. Some of them are exploring the wonders and workings of Nature, and some are exploring the wonderful machinery of their own being. All are engaged in labor and all have kind friends called guides. Shall I tell you what the labor is called? It is the natural labor of the human mind which the eternal soul is ever engaged in, and that is PROGRESSION.

The little children next attracted my attention. Little children! best and last! How careless and happy, with what ingenuous, beautiful, no-evil-fearing faces they enter. Hail! little spirits! How bright ye look. They do not weep. They do not shrink, nor tremble, nor turn back, but wander along in innocence and joy. Hither and thither they spread. One is attracted by a beautiful bird and chases that bird, drawn by his musical notes, and he laughs in the fulness of his spirit's joy. Another has found a beautiful flower. Oh! how delighted he looks. He bursts forth in a merry peal and calls his little companions to gaze on the treasure he has found. Another hears sweet music and has flown off to find it. As they wander off, one meets another, now a father, a mother, a brother, a sister. Oh! what a happy mingling of joy there is. How delighted they seem. Their Heaven is all Heaven, no cloud obscures their sky, but joyfully and trustingly they gambol and frolic in the beautiful pastures prepared for them. How it gladdens my spirit as I gaze on the scene. Oh! Innocents! How trust-

ing! How much nearer ye approach the godlike nature of our Father, in your happy beauty of trust. Ye know no evil, therefore ye fear no enemy. The chain which unloosened you from Heaven, has a spark of light retained in its links so untainted that ye scarce felt the transition. Happy ones! I leave you.

Radiant spirits! I thank ye for the entrance ye have given me to a lesson to give to mortals below. Faith! thou art mine. And Constance! I know thee and thank thee right gladly.

The city which I entered is that which is viewed by mortals in the flesh, and it seems to them that it is far off, because it is called "Holy." The entrance thereof through that massive gate is called Death; massive because the spirit's greatest entrance when cut loose from this sphere. And the angels on either side are the angels which usher us in, and the shining ones who were passing in and out of the city, were those who are sent back to earth on errands of mercy and love.

The city itself represents the Heaven which all contemplate as being their ultimate destination, whether they have lived, or felt, or expected a continued existence; and different aspects of the same country to the different minds which arrived there, will show you wherein they had wisely or unwisely prepared for their never-ending journey.

The gate is surely a golden one to many, and the entrance is always and ever watched by spirits which are waiting to receive the traveler who there commences his experience, guided by faith, led on by patience, supported by love, inasmuch as his former life and sphere of affinities will enable lovely spirits to approach him upon his first entrance.

And if this will enable any mortals to see in what relation they stand to the sphere of existence to which all are tending; if it will show them in how great a measure they may enjoy that Heaven on earth which is only a prelude to the actual state which they must all know and conceive for themselves in the different pictures which I have drawn and many more which are not here shown, I shall have accomplished my task and thank thee, O Patience!

Beautiful are the tokens of affection which are given by fond and trusting hearts. They cheer and gladden the pathway of the soul, shedding light amid the dark places of the earth, and breathing to the inner sense the fragrance of immortal flowers.

☞ The communication from Mrs. Hemans in the present number, was received through a lady in this city who has been recently developed as a speaking medium. A message purporting to be given by the spirit of Mr. Munn, will appear in our next issue.

SPIRITUALISM IN NEW YORK.

It will be gratifying to the friends of progress, to learn that the cause of spiritual truth is steadily progressing in this city. While there are here, as in other places, numerous and powerful obstacles to the spread of our philosophy, there is also a silent power—mightier than that of earth—which is gradually and irresistibly moulding the minds of the people. Every day bears evidence of the fact that the heaven of truth is at work; and even here, where materialism has prevailed in its most repulsive forms, there is a hopeful promise of the “good time coming.” A spirit of inquiry has gone abroad in the places where Mammon has erected her temples, and the voice of love that speaks from the heart of angels, rises superior to the clink of gold.

A movement is now being made in this city, which will doubtless result in the more rapid diffusion of the spiritual idea. Meetings are held weekly at a hall in Sixteenth Street, where persons interested in the subject assemble to listen to statements of facts and experience: a weekly conference is also held at the residence of Mr Partridge, designed for an interchange of thought and sentiment on subjects of a spiritual nature; and in addition to these, there are several established circles meeting in different parts of the city, among which may be mentioned, as a prominent representative, the “Circle of Hope,” in which numerous communications have been received from the Spirit-world of the most elevated character. In the movement that is now taking place, though it may be comparatively feeble in its beginning, is contained the germ of a gradual, but certain and widespread revolution, which will affect in an important degree the interests of the world.

R. P. A.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

We have received many indications of the pleasure with which the Messenger in its new form has been greeted, for all which we are duly grateful. It will be a pleasure to us to receive from friends in different localities, statements relating to the progress of Spiritualism in their region; and, from those who are accustomed to this department of labor, we should be happy to be favored with philosophical and well-digested communications, which may be based on the teachings of intuition or experience. There is a mission to be performed by every spiritual believer;—let each labor in his appointed sphere.—ED.

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

THIS Journal which, from its commencement, has lived beneath the protecting care of angelic ministers, continues to be sustained in its beneficent work, and will still go forth upon its mission to breathe peace on earth and good will to men. It will be devoted, as heretofore, to an investigation of the laws of Nature, the relations of Spirit and Matter, the principles of Social Reform, and the beautiful realities connected with Spiritual Intercourse and the Destiny of Man.

TERMS. — THE SPIRIT MESSENGER will be published by R. P. Ambler, on the first and fifteenth day of every month, from his Office, 208 Broadway, corner of Fulton Street, New York. Price of subscription \$1.00 per annum, PAYABLE IN ALL CASES IN ADVANCE. For a remittance of \$5.00 six copies will be sent to one address.

SPIRITUAL WORKS.

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER: comprising a Series of Twelve Lectures on the Nature and Development of the Spirit. Written by Spirits of the Sixth Circle. R. P. Ambler, Medium. This work, dictated by an unseen intelligence in the presence of responsible witnesses, was written in precisely *forty-three hours and forty-three minutes*. The subjects of which it treats are possessed of intrinsic interest, and have an important bearing on the welfare of the race. Muslin, 50 cents. Postage 8 cents.

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THE PILGRIMAGE OF THOMAS PAINE, and others, to the Seventh Circle in the Spirit-world, written by the spirit of Thomas Paine. Rev. C. Hammond, Medium. Muslin, 75 cents; paper, 50 cents. Postage 12 cents.

The above works, with others on spiritual subjects, are kept constantly on hand at this office, 208 Broadway, New York, and will be sent by mail to any address in the United States.

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